

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
ATTORNEY GENERAL



55 Elm Street  
P.O. Box 120  
Hartford, CT 06141-0120

Office of The Attorney General  
**State of Connecticut**

**TESTIMONY OF  
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
MARCH 14, 2007**

I appreciate the opportunity to support Senate Bill 1067, An Act Authorizing Civil Fines for Hospital Violations.

This proposal authorizes the Commissioner of Public Health to impose civil penalties on hospitals for violations of health care statutes and regulations of a maximum \$10,000 per day.

When patient care is compromised, more than warnings and probation are needed. Connecticut is home to premier, world class health care institutions, but there must be real enforcement means against health care violators. Senate Bill 1067 sends a message: Inadequate health services are unacceptable in this state.

Currently, no monetary penalties are imposed against hospitals and other health care facilities that violate state health laws, even the most serious violations involving inadequate patient care and treatment.

Existing enforcement measures allow the Department of Public Health (DPH) to place hospitals on probation and issue letters of reprimand. In the most serious cases, the department has the power to revoke a health care facility's license or certificate to operate -- a drastic measure that could dangerously disrupt the state's health care services.

In other areas, civil fines are a very common and effective regulatory sanction to ensure compliance with federal and state law. As an effective enforcement measure, DPH is already authorized to impose fines against nursing homes. Regulatory agencies such as the Departments of Banking, Insurance and Public Utility Control all have the power to impose civil penalties on individuals and businesses.

I urge support for Senate Bill 1067.